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Title: The Corruption

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History of Malas, pt 3

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"Taril, you have him now.  
Keep your concentration."  
Mordin said quietly. He  
brushed a wisp of gray  
hair away from his eyes  
and turned to his  
students.

"What you are witnessing  
is a power that is never  
to be underestimated or  
disrespected. The art of  
necromancy gives us a  
very delicate ability that  
you will need immense  
concentration and  
discipline to master. You  
are dealing with the very  
forces that allow us to  
live and exist. Many  
equate our art with the  
power of death, which I  
have always considered a  
misinterpretation... Taril,  
are you ready?"

Taril sat behind Mordin  
at a large wooden table.  
His hand hovered over a  
small dead rat that was  
standing upright and  
keeping its balance as if  
it were alive. The  
slightest blue glow  
surrounded both Taril's  
hand and the rat. Taril's  
face was blank with  
concentration but he  
glanced at Mordin and  
nodded quickly. As Taril  
moved his hand the rat  
walked awkwardly with  
slow and deliberate steps  
to a small wheel. With  
great care it crawled  
inside the wheel and

faced forward. Taril paused and took a small breath and held it as he focused intently on the rat within the wheel. One by one it began to move its legs forward and was walking inside the wheel. "This is not a power that controls death, but one that channels life." Mordin continued. "Nothing is more precious than life, and nothing in the bounds of necromancy is more important than how skillfully life is channeled. Some of you may think practicing on small dead animals to be a bit dull. What you must understand is that this power, your power, can easily kill the living if you do not fully know the boundaries of your own abilities." He turned and watched the rat run in place for a moment. "Well done, Taril. Release him." Taril brought the rat to a stop and it climbed off the wheel. Taril smirked and the rat made a small theatrical bow before the glow surrounding it faded and it dropped to the table. Mordin raised an eyebrow at his pupil and continued. "Perhaps an even more important issue to understand in your studies is that a respect for death, no matter how small, can be even more important than a respect for life. When you believe, even for an instant, that you have the right to channel life into the lifeless for your own amusement or gain then you risk forgetting the benefits of this art. If you have no intention of using your skills to help others, you will not

learn them from me."

As Mordin glared at the classroom he noticed his brother standing quietly in the back.

"That will be all for today. We shall continue at the same time tomorrow so please bring your reagents and all of your notes on disease curing. Thank you everyone, thank you." As the students filed out of the room Mordin's voice cut through the mumbling chatter. "Taril, I trust my last message was not lost on you?"

Taril stopped and spun as if he had been shot in the back with a dart. "No master, it was not."

"Please contemplate it tonight when you clean the stables."

"Master we had discussed you allowing me to scribe spells from the tome..."

Mordin cut Taril's words short. "Consider yourself fortunate that I am still considering it. The knowledge of the tome is only open to those who respect it completely, Taril, never forget that."

Taril's face tightened slightly. "Yes master." He bowed his head slightly and walked stiffly out of the room.

"He reminds me of one of my students." Greyn chuckled. His long white hair seemed to blend in with his bright white robes. "He is ready to seize the world and show it how things are done."

Mordin met his brother halfway through the teaching toom and they clasped hands. "If he didn't remind me a little of myself I think I'd have given up by now." He

grinned. "This is the third time this month we've seen each other. We simply must stop meeting like this."

Greyn sighed. "Yet another fight between our students."

"It's a nice evening tonight and I've been in this room for two hours lecturing. Join me for a walk." Mordin held the door open as he grabbed his cloak and the two brothers stepped into the last light of sunset.

"I've already told my student that I will no longer instruct him."

Mordin started. "People seem to be wary enough of the knowledge I've recovered from the book, I don't need students perpetuating the idea that necromancy is dangerous."

"Isn't it, Mordin?" Greyn said quickly.

Mordin paused and looked at his brother questioningly. "You didn't come here just to talk about our students fighting did you?"

"I've been doing a great deal of thinking lately. We studied the books ourselves for thirty years before we decided to share the knowledge so it could be passed on. We've been teaching for ten years now. Every year the mistrust seems to grow and grow, your students and mine increasingly at odds with each other." Greyn

stopped and looked at Mordin. "All the knowledge I've found in the Paladin's Archive I have shared with my students. You hold so much back. What are you protecting?" Mordin sighed. "The

necromancer's tome has a warning." He clasped his hands nervously. "It's vague. I didn't tell anyone but I stopped studying the book about three years ago because I was afraid of what I might uncover."

"And what if the book should fall into the wrong hands? What then?"

Greyn sounded grim.

"I planned on only inscribing the safe spells from the book and then hiding it. After what I read I considered casting it into the void." Mordin stared at the ground. "It speaks of some unspeakable destruction used to cover light in shadow or something to that effect. I think it may have even been used in a war."

"So you have no intention of letting anyone else see the book?" Greyn asked.

"No. No it's far, far too dangerous. Taril will no doubt become my successor but only with the spells I know are safe. The tome will have to be hidden permanently.

Greyn when I think of the things that could be done with the powers inside... unnatural things, malicious things. In the wrong hands it could be chaos." Mordin resumed walking in silence for a moment.

"No one can know. You must not tell a soul."

"I promise, brother."

Greyn said. "I'm proud of you for having the strength to rid yourself of the book."

"Not just myself, the world." Mordin sighed.

"You've set my fears at ease, Mordin. I trust

